

part should be comparatively small. Do not forget the stranger or the member; let him have a chance to participate.

Give sparkle and brightness to the service, but do not strive inordinately after variety. The concert reading of a hymn, instead of singing it; a moment of prayer before the Scripture reading, that all hearts may be open to it, and a brief period of silent meditation upon the word that has been read; the recitation of a part or the whole of the pledge, the singing, with bowed heads and closed eyes, of some prayer song—such are simple novelties that aid the spirit of a meeting and add to its impressiveness.

Strive to cultivate the devotional spirit, and spontaneity and informality. Then make the meeting stand for something. Aim to give it one predominating characteristic that will remain as a clear impression upon the minds of the members. When you close the exercises, do not break them off in the middle. Lead up to the end. Let the last moments be peaceful dignified fitting.—J. R. Miller.

The Sunday School

LESSON FOR DECEMBER 19

BY THE EDITOR

John's Message About Sin and Salvation I John 1: 5-2: 6

GOLDEN TEXT.—If we confess our sins he is faithful and just to forgive our sins.—I John 1: 9.

LESSON THOUGHT.—God is light, life and love, in these we should ever live, walk and keep.

Home Readings

John's message about sin, etc., I Jno. 1: 5-2: 6
All have sinned, Rom. 3: 19-26.
Consequences of sin, Isa. 59: 19.
Returning unto the Lord, Hos. 14.
Life by Christ, Rom. 5: 12-21.
Perfect sacrifice, Heb. 10: 12-23.
Able to save, Heb. 7: 19-28.

Introductory Notes

The writer of this epistle was the apostle John. It is the fourth in order of what are known as the general epistles, that is epistles not addressed to any particular church, but to the churches in general. It was the same John who wrote the gospel of John, in which he speaks of himself as the apostle whom Jesus loved. It is supposed that this letter was written in the last years of his life. He lived to a great age and to the very last retained that affectionate, loving disposition which characterized him when with the twelve and Christ. The lesson for to-day deals with sin, but not with sin alone. John shows that there is a way of escape from sin's curse and penalty. The way is of course thro Christ, and that by faith in him. Those who are in Christ Jesus are free from the power and consequences of sin. It has no longer any dominion over him.

Meaning of the Text

1. *I charge thee.* As if he said, I lay an

obligation upon you as the authorized apostle of the Lord Jesus in the presence of God. *Judge.* A day of judgment is coming for all in which God's people will be vindicated. *The quick,* those living at the coming of the judgment, and the *dead* shall alike be judged. *At.* R. V. By, thus introducing a new motive.

2. *Preach the word.* To preach means to proclaim, to herald forth. This act of preaching is distinctively a characteristic of the Christian religion. The Word is the message God gives to men thro the gospel truths. *Be instant.* Be earnest, sincere, and use every opportunity to preach the gospel. *In season, out of season.* Under circumstances favorable or unfavorable. *Reprove.* Convict men of error, show them their fault. *Rebuke.* A stronger word, meaning to blame with a decided dislike. *Exhort.* Strengthen, encourage.

3. *Sound doctrine.* Healthful, soul nourishing teaching. This kind of teaching will not always be accepted, *Lusts.* Their own desires will bring together teachers who will please their itching ears.

4. *Turning away—from truth.* Not being able to endure sound doctrine they will be more and more turned from the principles of the gospel. *Fables.* Used in contrast with *truth*, hence the error and false teaching to which they listen and which has ensnared their souls.

5. *But watch.* R. V. Be sober and give the most diligent attention to thy soul and thy work. *Endure afflictions.* Suffer the hardships that may come in the faithful discharge of your duty. *Evangelist.* One whose special office is to preach the gospel. *Full proof.* Do thy work well and all of it.

6. *For.* Because my work is done. *I—ready—offered.* R. V. For I am already being offered. Paul was at Rome awaiting execution of the death sentence passed upon him by Nero. He knew that at any hour the tyrant's sword might fall. *Departure.* The word here used means the loosing of the cables that hold a vessel to the shore until the moment of starting.

7. On this verse Hoffman says, "All three propositions denote the same thing. The second gives prominence to one particular form of contest, while the third clearly expresses how entirely Paul had done with life.

8. *Henceforth.* Literally, as concerns the rest. At the end of this life comes the time of rewards and crowning. *Crown of righteousness.* The just award of right living through the grace of God. *Lord—that day.* Jesus is the one who shall vindicate all his faithful followers in the day of their judgment. *Love his appearing.* Those who patiently look for his coming when he shall bring his rewards with him. Rev. 22: 12.

16-18. *First answer.* Better, first defence. That is at his first trial in the emperor's court no one took his part. Verses 9-15 show that most forsook him. But the Lord

stood with me. Here was his joy and in this he could rejoice even unto death.

What I Can Do

- 1 Walk in the light of God.
- 2 Keep in the love of God.
- 3 Live in the life of God.
- 4 Confess my sins and ask forgiveness.
- 5 Show my love by obedience.
- 6 Forgive that I may be forgiven.

Thoughts For Young People

Principles of the New Life

1. All men have sin in themselves. There is no man who never sins, no man who can by his own strength rise above sin.

2. The difference between the Christian and the sinner is not that one is without sin and the other lives in sin; but that one hates sin and seeks to overcome it, while the other cherishes it.

3. The way to rise out of sin is to recognize its reality in us, to confess it to God, and to our neighbor, if we have wronged him. Then we are in condition to be freed from sin.

4. He who seeks God needs a propitiation and an advocate; a propitiation making forgiveness possible, and an advocate to intercede for him. These we have in Jesus Christ our Lord.

5. If we will thus confess our sins God will be faithful to his promise and just in his dealings: will forgive our sins, and will cleanse us from sin in our lives by a new creation.

6. He who comes to God through Christ enjoys a full acceptance, an abundant cleansing, and a communion of heart with God's people.

7. The follower of God will seek to do God's will, and to follow the example of God's Son. This will be the evidence that he is a true follower.

To Make You Think

1. What is John's message about God.
2. What does he say elsewhere of the true light? John 1: 9. Are not Christians the light of the world?
3. How then is Jesus the light of the world?
4. How is God like light?
5. If we would have fellowship with God, what must we do?
6. When have we mutual fellowship? When are we self-deceived and false?
7. May we know that we are pardoned?
8. May we know that we are Christians? How?
9. What is the condition of forgiveness?
10. Can one feel it when he is forgiven?
11. Is feeling a safe guide?
12. What is?
13. What does David say of confession and pardon? Psalm 32: 5.
14. Can we conceal our sins?
15. How only can we get rid of them?
16. Do all men sin?
17. What of those who say they have no sin?
18. How may we be certain that we love God?
19. Whom does John call a liar?
20. Is such language in harmony with the sweet and loving character of John?

The Lesson Applied

1. *God Is Light.*—There are in this world two kingdoms—the kingdom of darkness and